



Memorandum

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Robert L. Davis
Jeffrey L. Clet

SUBJECT: SEE BELOW

DATE: May 13, 2005

Approved

/s/

Date

06/07/05

SUBJECT: MAXIMIZING EFFICIENCIES IN POLICE AND FIRE COMMUNICATIONS

This memorandum is prepared in response to the Mayor's March 2005 Budget Message to implement cross training for Fire and Police Communications personnel that will lead to the elimination of duplicate services and greater efficiencies.

RECOMMENDATION

- Revise 40-Hour Continuous Professional Training (CPT) to provide Police calltakers with more proficient level of support to Fire calltakers during major events
- Implement One Hour CPT for Police to include Fire/EMS call processing sheet, policy and procedures
- Police and Fire Communications to continue to collaborate to provide a more effective level of service to the community

BACKGROUND

San José remains the safest big city in America, and San José residents feel safe in their neighborhoods. Additionally, our city claims the title as one of the most prepared cities for disasters. The City's ability to attain this high level of recognition is anchored by the solid foundation built by our Public Safety CSA in the development of the critical skills, talents and expertise required of our police and fire dispatchers. Over the years, Police, Fire and the Office of Emergency Services (OES) have continually searched for opportunities to maximize the effectiveness of services provided to the community. Examples include:

- Training and cooperation with the OES in preparation for response to terrorist or other Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) incidents.
- Participation on the countywide team that brought an Interoperability radio system that both Police and Fire can utilize for any large scale, multi-agency emergency incidents.

ANALYSIS

After almost fifteen years of operation, it has become evident that Police and Fire Dispatchers have unique skills and distinct differences in their delivery of service to their respective public safety officers, as well as to the public. This is best illustrated by the significant differences in the content of their initial academy training. An itemized list of the differences in topics follows:

Police Calltaker Academy

POST Basic Public Safety Dispatcher Academy	240 hours
(includes 40 hrs Basic Public Safety Telecommunicator)	
CAD Instruction Fundamentals	16 hours
CAD Instruction (Police Specific)	24 hours
Police Call Taking Applications/Scenarios	80 hours
Police Specific Policies and Procedures	<u>40 hours</u>
	400 hours

Fire Calltaker Academy

Emergency Medical Dispatcher Course	40 hours
POST Basic Fire Dispatcher Course	80 hours
Basic Public Safety Telecommunicator	40 hours
CPR/AED Certification	8 hours
CAD Instruction Fundamentals	16 hours
CAD Instruction (Fire Specific)	24 hours
Incident Command System-100	4 hours
Critical Incident Stress Management/ Dealing with Death and Dying	10 hours
Introduction to Systems Control	4 hours
Continuing Education/Proficiency Quality Assurance	24 hours
Engine Company Ride Along	8 hours
Emergency Contingency/Alternate Public Safety Augmentation Plan	8 hours
Fire Specific Policies and Procedures	100 hours
Fire Calltaking Applications/Scenarios	<u>114 hours</u>
	480 hours

Police and Fire Calltaker Academies have only 64 hours of common training topics: 40 hours of basic Telecommunicator training and 24 hours of fundamental CAD training. Everything else is either Police or Fire specific.

What this means is that in addition to the 400 hours received in the Police Calltaker Academy, a Police Calltaker would have to attend an additional 416 hours of Fire specific academic training in order to fully prepare them for the Police and Fire On-the-Job Training Program, that would then eventually prepare them to become fully competent fire calltakers.

Several cross training models have been evaluated and the results of those evaluations are described below.

40-Hour Continuous Professional Training (CPT) Proposal

As a result of previous studies, Police and Fire communications have come to recognize that developing a fully cross-trained work force would be cost prohibitive and extremely difficult to maintain minimal skill levels in both disciplines. However, it was recognized that advanced fire calltaking skills could be provided to the police calltakers to help provide a more proficient level of support to the Fire Calltakers during major conflagrations such as we experienced with the Santana Row/Moorpark Fires.

The goal would be to minimize overtime costs and provide this enhanced level of training during regularly scheduled sessions of Police Communications CPT. Optimally, Police Calltakers would be required to complete 40 hours of Fire Calltaker-specific training to improve their fire calltaking skills and to become more familiar with Fire-specific policy and procedures. The 40 hours would consist of the following:

- An abbreviated Basic Fire Dispatcher Course providing instruction in Fire Calltaking Skills, Wildland Fires, High-Rise Fires, Aircraft Incidents, Fire Suppression System Activations, Hazardous Materials and WMD Incidents (20 hours)
- Practical Application of Fire Calltaking in the Learning Center and Control Room (Sit-Alongs) (15 hours)
- Review of Policies, Procedures, including Fire/EMS call processing worksheet (5 hours)

Once this training is completed, the Police Calltaker would be required to complete quarterly learning center drills to keep and improve their fire calltaking skills.

One Hour CPT Proposal

In discussions with Police Communications management, Police has already committed all but one-hour of CPT to mandated training topics such as UASI, National Incident Management System, and Department of Justice updates.

With these restrictions in mind, we propose that a greater level of proficiency could be gained by reviewing the current call processing worksheet, and the policies and procedures of Fire/EMS call processing during a one-hour overview session during their CPT scheduled to begin in August.

At minimum, a two-hour “sit-along” would then need to be scheduled for each Police Calltaker in the fire control room, plus an additional two-hour scenario workshop in the learning center, practicing event creation during major conflagrations and/or disaster incidents. Both sessions would need to be completed while on duty in order to minimize overtime costs.

Each year’s subsequent CPT would need to include at least a two-hour review of the Fire/EMS call processing sheet, policy and procedures; annual sit-alongs and major incident drills in the learning center.

Collaboration Initiatives

Our analysis identified a number of areas Police and Fire Communications could collaborate further in order to provide a more effective level of service to each other and to the community.

Foster a team approach to effectively manage an Emergency Contingency Plan Training Program to address:

- Catastrophic Community Disaster (i.e., Earthquake, Floods, Hazmat, Terrorism)
- Disaster at the Communications Center (i.e., Bomb, Fire, Plane Crash)
 - Cooperative emergency call processing techniques and dispatching protocols,
 - Training in personal/family/work related safety precautions,
 - Survival techniques, search & rescue strategies, first aid, evacuation procedures,
 - Alternate dispatch site relocation, set-up and operational procedures.
- Large-Scale Event (i.e., Major conflagration, multi-casualty incidents, terrorist events)
 - Training police call takers to provide a greater level of support to fire dispatchers during high-call volume events.

Continue to develop programs and policies to share Information Technology and other Systems Support responsibilities and staff time.

- Computer Aided Dispatch System –Information Technology support
- Geo-file/Mapping support
- Radio and Emergency Telephone systems support
- Future Wireless Data systems support
- Other systems support issues

Additionally, City-wide policies could be co-presented to dispatch personnel maximizing instructor time (i.e., violence in the workplace, sexual harassment, substance abuse, ethics, customer services, e-mail policy, etc.)

COORDINATION

This memo was coordinated with the Office of Emergency Services.

/s/
Robert L. Davis
Chief of Police
San José Police Department

/s/
Jeffrey L. Clet
Fire Chief
San José Fire Department